

Assembly Joint Resolution No. 66

RESOLUTION CHAPTER 42

Assembly Joint Resolution No. 66—Relative to redress for World War II Japanese Latin American internees.

[Filed with Secretary of State May 6, 1998.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AJR 66, Honda. Redress for World War II Japanese Latin American internees.

This measure would support the granting of an official apology and restitution to World War II Japanese Latin American internees pursuant to federal law.

WHEREAS, During World War II, the United States government orchestrated, financed, and directed the mass arrest and deportation of 2,264 men, women, and children of Japanese ancestry from various Latin American countries to United States internment camps, according to a 1983 Congressional report; and

WHEREAS, The United States government carried out this program to use these civilians in prisoner exchanges for Americans held by the Japanese during the war; and

WHEREAS, Twelve Latin American governments—Bolivia, Colombia, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, and Peru—supported this mass arrest and deportation; and

WHEREAS, In violation of basic human rights, the United States abducted those persons without charges, hearings, or any kind of due process and forcibly transported them to Immigration and Naturalization Service detention facilities in a country and culture foreign to them, far away from their homes; and

WHEREAS, Over 860 Japanese Latin Americans were sent to Japan in prisoner-of-war exchanges, while about 1,400 remained incarcerated in United States internment camps until the end of the war; and

WHEREAS, Congress passed the Civil Liberties Act of 1988 (50 U.S.C. Sec. 1989 et seq.), which provided an official apology and restitution to Japanese American internees; and

WHEREAS, The United States Department of Justice has interpreted the act to bar Japanese Latin Americans from being eligible for redress because they were not United States citizens or legal permanent residents at the time of the war; and

WHEREAS, The Japanese Latin American internees and their families seek the same official apology and restitution provided the Japanese American internees; and

WHEREAS, The Japanese Latin American internees and their families seek the United States government's acknowledgment of this tragic and largely unknown experience; and

WHEREAS, A federal class action lawsuit was filed on August 28, 1996, challenging the denial of redress to the Japanese Latin American internees and their families under the Civil Liberties Act of 1988; and

WHEREAS, More than 80 Members of Congress from across the country have publicly expressed their support for redress for the Japanese Latin American internees; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Assembly and Senate of the State of California, jointly, That the Legislature of the State of California supports the granting of an official apology and restitution to World War II Japanese Latin American internees pursuant to federal law; and be it further

Resolved, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies of this resolution to the President and Vice President of the United States, to the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and to each Senator and Representative from California in the Congress of the United States.

